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Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi Foundation gets well deserved recognition!



Holiday Inn celebrates a new style *in style!*



Holiday Inn Sunspree General Manager Patricia Perrone shows off the stylish new sign

see story on page 2

Last Saturday evening on the Plaza Betico Croes, during the celebration of their first lustrum, the Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi Foundation received the prestigious Prins Bernhard Culture Fund Award. Alice van Romondt and Roly Sint Jago, both members of the Board of the Prins Bernhard Culture Fund had the privilege of presenting the prestigious Award to Mrs. Olga Buckley, the brainchild of the Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi Foundation.

The Prins Bernhard Culture Fund Award is presented every two years on each of the islands in the Dutch Caribbean. It is either given to an individual or to a group that excelled in some area in the cultural field. The prize consists of a cash sum and a bronze statue sculptured by a famous sculpturist from Curacao.

This is the 4th time that this award has been presented here on Aruba. The first time that the prize was given on Aruba was for Visual Arts and was presented to Glenda Heyliger. In 2007 Eddy and Ito Tromp received the award for their 40 years of presenting the cultural radio program called Butishi di Alegria.

Two years later, in 2009, the honor went to Oslin "Chin" Boekhoudt for his magnificent work in the world of theater. This year, 2011, the prize was given for work on the area of



literature to Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi and their outstanding contribution to culture with their innovative and effective promotion of reading to and for children.

The idea of entering a home and reading from a book to children before bedtime is a

very wholesome and fun activity which gives reading and books an elevated place in a home and in the minds of young children. Parents are also stimulated to read to their children and carry on the practice.

Continued on page 3

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Bigotry charges buffet US retailer over Muslim TV show

WASHINGTON (AFP) - One of the biggest US retailers faced charges of bigotry yesterday after it bowed to pressure from a Christian group and stopped advertising on a reality TV show about Arab Americans.

Lowe's, a national hardware chain, said it was among a number of sponsors to abandon "All-American Muslim," which follows the daily lives of five suburban families of Arab heritage in Dearborn, Michigan.

"Individuals and groups have strong political and societal views on this topic, and this program became a lightning rod for many of those views," it said in a statement on its Facebook page.

"As a result, we did pull our advertising on this program. We believe it is best to respectfully defer to communities, individuals and groups to discuss and consider such issues of importance."

Its decision cheered the Florida Family Association, a little-known Christian group that upholds "traditional, biblical values" and campaigns against "immoral content" on television shows.

Through its website, it had encouraged supporters to fling emails at Lowe's and other

companies that bought advertising time on the ongoing series that premiered in November on the TLC cable channel.

"The show profiles only Muslims that appear to be ordinary folks while excluding many Islamic believers whose agenda poses a clear and present danger to liberties and traditional values that the majority of Americans cherish," it said.

But over the weekend, with Christmas shoppers filling its stores, Lowe's found itself in the crosshairs of Arab American and other groups, plus a legion of critics on Facebook and Twitter.

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee declared its own email campaign to target the retailer for succumbing to what it called the "idiocracy" of "garbage campaigns" waged by bigots and racists.

"At a time when many corporations are courting the American-Muslim market, it makes absolutely no sense at all that any corporation, including Lowe's ... would take such action," its legal director Abed Ayoub said.

Continued on page 4

Holiday Inn celebrates a new style in style!



Patricia Perrone and staff

Holiday Inn Sunspree General Manager Patricia Perrone welcomed resort employees and loyal guests for an impromptu fete yesterday afternoon to unveil their new logo, with contemporary and stylish new signs around the façade and grounds.

Modern lit signage has already taken up residence in the gardens; many veteran visitors commented they found it an attractive change perfectly suited to the new stylistic "H" that dominates the modern design.

The Lavdadios, Parkers and Ms. Cellers and Weinstein enjoyed the festive unveiling alongside Holiday Inn employees; music was provided by an abbreviated version of popular local band Tsunami, and together they were literally dancing in the streets.

The new look heralds some major remodeling of one of Aruba's vanguard Palm Beach Resorts. Between them, the small of groups of guests mention above total nearly 100 years of visiting Aruba, and are



Loyal guests admire the new logo

loyal patrons of the Holiday Inn, in particular.

All of the resort staff, at all levels feel very positively about the new logo and its at-

tractive, tropical color scheme, which will be carried through to the new décor.

by Rosalie Klein

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Ling and Sons IGA's Calendar 2012 featuring Aruba's monument

The much anticipated Ling and Sons IGA calendar is finally here! Ling and Sons IGA showed everyone its calendar for the year 2012 with beautiful images of the monuments of Aruba. With this calendar Ling and Sons IGA wants to give tribute to our 25 years of Status Apartus.

A calendar that honors Aruba's monuments and that is very colorful.

This calendar was made possible thanks to the beautiful images taken by well known photographer Diane Keijzer who allowed Ling and Sons to use her photographs that she had taken of the Aruban monuments.

And for this very same reason, the Management of Ling and Sons invited Mrs. Diane Keijzer to receive the first copy of the new calendar 2012. Mrs. Keijzer was delighted to see her work featured on the Ling and Sons free calendar has become a tradition here in Aruba and is expected to be a big hit again this year!

Ling and Sons IGA cordially invites everyone to come and shop at the #1 super-



market in Aruba for the best quality and service you can always count on and to pick up a copy of the calendar 2012!

Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi Foundation . . .

Continued from page 1



A large group of volunteers participate as team members of the Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi team, with Minister Michelle Winklaar-Hooyboer as one of their very active elite members for the past 3 years.

The promotion of reading among children, initiated by Olga Buckley, has even garnered the attention of folks in Curacao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius, Saba and Surinam.

The Vice President of the Prins Bernhard Culture Funds, Alice Van Romondt indicated in her speech on the occasion of presenting the award that... "I can compare Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi's work as a drop of oil in the ocean that continues to spread over the ocean and reach other territories. There is nothing that can stop

its spread...."

The members of the Aruba Board of the Prins Bernhard Culture Funds, namely, Des Croes, Margareth Hage, Edsel Lopez, Frensel Giel, and Roly Sint Jago voted unanimously to authorize this year's award to go to Bon Nochi Drumi Dushi Foundation. This is in support and recognition for their innovative and superb work of promoting reading among our children and families.

President, Olga Buckley was very surprised for the nomination and thrilled that her organization was chosen to receive such a prestigious award. She received the award in recognition of the diligent and dedicated work of the entire team of volunteers and members of her board.

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Aruba celebrates another FCCA Holiday Gift Project



Recently, the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) together with the Aruba Tourism Authority celebrated the annual Holiday Gift Project at the Renaissance Convention Center. A total of 200 gifts were shipped to Aruba by the FCCA on the Cruise Ship "Celebrity Constellation" for the event. This year the event was coordinated by ATA representative Mr. ErnestGiel, who invited 3 schools of Dakota, Pius de X, Fatima College and Jacinta Kleuter School, to attend the event with a group of the most needed children of those schools.

With the great cooperation of De Palm Tours and Fofoti Tours, the children were transported to the Renais-

sance Convention Center, which also gave their cooperation by hosting the event in their premises decorated in a very beautiful Christmas ambience.

The Aruba Tourism Authority arranged for the all the children to wear a very trendy T-shirt with the Aruba logo on it, which gave the event an extra colorful taste and also supply all the children with snacks and soft drinks. The gifts were presented to the children by the crew members of the Celebrity Constellation who were very grateful to have the privilege to attend the event and make the children happy.

Needless to say all the children went back home with smiling faces from an unforgettable day.

Launching of 2012 Calendar of Aruba's Birds by American Home Assurances

For the 4th consecutive year, American Home Assurance Company issued its calendar dedicated to the preservation of Aruba's nature, in particular, our wonderful birds.

Photos for all the calendars are by conservation enthusiast Greg Peterson, founder and president of Aruba Birdlife Conservation.

Mrs. Niti Gupta, wife of American Home Managing Director Prakash Gupta, handed the first edition of the 2012 calendar to Aruba Minister of Justice and Education, Arthur Dowers.

Prakash Gupta expressed his sincere gratitude to Greg Peterson and Grace Tjin, who together, worked diligently to finish the calendar on schedule. The company management decided to donate 1,000 copies of the 2012 calendar to the Aruba Birdlife Conservation to sell and so support their worthy cause.

Those interested in obtaining a copy can send an e-mail to Aruba.birdlife.conservation@gmail.com.

Photos show moments of the American Home Assurance 2012 Calendar event on December 2.



First calendar handed over to Minister Dowers



Miro Dabian with Grace Tjin



Bigotry charges buffet US retailer ...

Continued from page 2

In California, where Lowe's has dozens of outlets, state senator Ted Lieu threatened Lowe's with a consumer boycott and unspecified "legislative remedies" over what he called its "bigoted, shameful and un-American" conduct.

Celebrities piled in via Twitter, with actress Mia Farrow denouncing "the cowardice of @Lowe's" and "That '70s Show" star Danny Masterson asking: "u r officially religious bigots.how does that feel?"

On its Facebook page,

Lowe's acknowledged the mealstrom it found itself in, without saying whether it would go back to advertising on "All-American Muslim."

"It appears that we managed to step into a hotly contested debate with strong views from virtually every angle and perspective -- social, political and otherwise -- and we've managed to make some people very unhappy," it said.

"We are sincerely sorry."

But that remark prompted no less than 10,000 comments from both sides of the argu-

ment, from "I am SOOOO proud of Lowe's for pulling the ads" to a succinct "disgusted by your actions."

Hackers claiming to be part of the Internet activist group Anonymous meanwhile said they had penetrated Florida Family Association's website and made off with email addresses and credit card details of its supporters.

For its part, the TLC network said: "We stand behind 'All-American Muslim' and we're happy the show has strong advertising support."

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MAMBO and Oranjestad main street announce their Christmas Village 2011



ORANJESTAD – MAMBO Directive announced that they will conduct its Christmas Village in the mainstreet to facilitate holiday shopping. As earlier mentioned by government officials, the Christmas Village will be a daily event, until the end of the year. The Caya Betico Croes is already festively dressed with Christmas decorations, Christmas trees, and stages for various seasonal entertainment and other activities.

There will be different Dino Jumps to entertain the kids while the parents do their shopping. Different establishments will have tents outside on the walkway offering sidewalk sales for bargain hunters.

A number of establishments will stay open until 8 p.m. to accommodate after-work shopping, combined with the Christmas lights and decorations, this will provide patrons with a delightful holiday ambiance.

All are invited to discover the diversity and quality of vendors on Oranjestad's main shopping street, with the pleasant hustle and bustle and seasonal spirit that enhances and makes end of year shopping an enjoyable outing, instead of a chore.

Is a doctor from Florida Joran van der Sloot's new conquest?

While authorities in Peru can lock up Joran Van der Sloot, they evidently cannot contain his charm and manipulative ways.

Though he's jailed for the murder of Stephany Flores and considered the prime suspect in the disappearance of Natalee Holloway, the 24-year-old Dutchman brags that he still gets a lot of attention from women.

One such woman is Dr Mary Hamer, 55, a radiologist from Florida who has been corresponding with Van der Sloot for more than a

year.

Dr Hamer, who is divorced, was struck by Van der Sloot since the moment she heard about the Flores case, and believes he may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

She also claims that he is the subject of an international conspiracy and has been suffering abuse in prison that has left him visibly shaken.

Says Dr Hamer: 'I have a very strong feeling about protecting. It's a very deep natural instinct of mine that is driving me - not driving me,

but allowing me the freedom - to help Joran.'

After speaking to his attorney and his mother Anita Van der Sloot, Dr Hamer sent the first of several care packages to him last year.

and she continues to send them today. They contain everything from disinfectant wipes to books on spirituality to clothing he can wear in court.

Later, Dr Hamer was given the first of several opportunities to visit him.

'I come every six months. I will come for the rest of my

life. I have even told Joran I will move here,' she said, adding: 'I will tell them [Peruvian authorities] I will move into that prison and live with him, because I am committed.'

Committed she may be, but the doctor insists that her attraction to the 24-year-old is protective in nature, and not sexual.

In a recent interview Dr Hamer called herself Van der Sloot's 'civil rights advocate, spiritual guide and guardian angel.'



Dr Mary Hamer

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

DR Congo's Kabila admits vote flaws but defends re-election

KINSHASA (AFP) - DR Congo President Joseph Kabila admitted yesterday there were flaws in the elections that handed him a new five-year term but rejected a report finding they lacked credibility.

The assessment was Kabila's first public statement since the bitterly disputed November 28 vote, whose outcome sparked violent protests in the capital and was criticised by international observers and the country's powerful church.

"Were there mistakes, errors? Definitely, like in any other election, be it on the continent or otherwise," Kabila, in power since 2001, told a news conference in Kinshasa with journalists including the BBC.

"But does it put in doubt the credibility of the elections? I don't think so."

In a damning report on the polls, international observers from the Carter Center, a non-profit group founded by former US president Jimmy Carter, said Saturday the counting process was so flawed the results "lack credibility".

Kabila yesterday rejected that finding. "The credibility of these elections cannot be put in doubt," he said.

But the polls got another

scathing review yesterday from the National Episcopal Conference of the Congo, the country's Catholic bishops' council, which deployed some 30,000 observers nationwide, the largest monitoring group on voting day.

The Conference's observations "pose a serious question about the credibility of these elections, as the Carter Center report has just attested," the archbishop of Kinshasa, Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo, told journalists.

"The results announced by the CENI (Independent National Electoral Commission) on December 9 comply with neither truth nor justice," said the archbishop, a powerful public figure in the largely Catholic country.

Election officials announced Friday that Kabila had defeated veteran opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi 49 percent to 32 percent in the polls, just the second since back-to-back wars from 1996 to 2003.

Tshisekedi immediately rejected the outcome and declared himself the legitimately elected president.

Candidates have until today to file election disputes at the supreme court, which is charged with reviewing the result and declaring the official winner by December 17.

Obama demands Iran return downed US drone

WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama yesterday acknowledged a US drone was in Iranian hands for the first time and said the United States has asked Tehran to return the sophisticated spy craft.

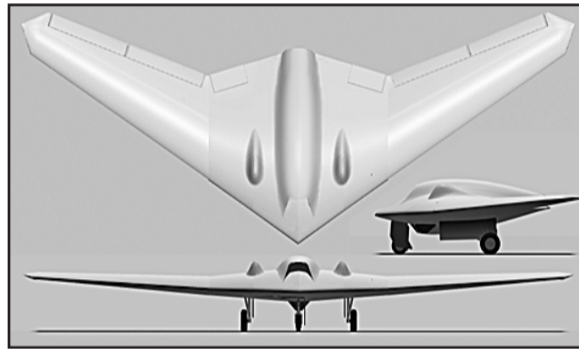
"We've asked for it back. We'll see how the Iranians respond," Obama said at a news conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki.

It was the first open confirmation by the Obama administration that Iran was in possession of the drone, which Tehran says it brought down as the plane was flying over the country's territory.

Obama, however, shed no further light on the plane's mission or why it failed to return to a base in Afghanistan.

"With respect to the drone inside of Iran, I'm not going to comment on intelligence matters that are classified," he said.

The bat-winged RQ-170 Sentinel, designed to evade radar for surveillance flights,



The bat-winged RQ-170 Sentinel

was on a CIA mission when it went missing, US officials, speaking anonymously, have said previously.

The episode has handed Iran a propaganda coup and Iranian state television has shown images of a robotic aircraft that experts say resembles the Sentinel.

Iran has vowed to reverse engineer the drone but has given contradictory accounts of how the aircraft went down on December 4. Tehran initially said it shot down the drone but later claimed the Iranian military managed to hack into the plane's flight controls.

US officials have expressed skepticism that Iran has the technological capac-

ity to have brought the plane down through hacking and that it was more likely the drone suffered a malfunction.

Other American drones have flown off-course in the past, including the Fire Scout robotic helicopter, which engineers lost contact

with during a flight in Maryland in 2010.

Military commanders at one point considered shooting the helicopter down as it was heading towards the US capital but technicians managed to gain back control over the aircraft.

US officials and analysts also have cast doubt over Iran's ability to replicate the drone -- at least without the help of Russia or China.

"US capabilities are remarkably advanced, and it's unclear that the Iranians have the expertise" to exploit the advanced technology -- including sensors -- in the aircraft, a US official speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity said recently.

Mexico shootout leaves 11 outlaws dead

MEXICO CITY (AFP) - Eleven alleged hitmen died in a weekend shootout with soldiers in northeast Mexico, the defense ministry said yesterday.

Soldiers on patrol encountered the armed men inside a building in the town of Valle Hermoso, in the state of Tamaulipas, near the US border, on Saturday, a statement said.

"Eleven attackers died on site and two more were detained," it said, without giving more details about the alleged assailants.

One soldier was wounded

and 73 large firearms as well as ammunition were confiscated from the site, the statement added.

Tamaulipas is one of the worst affected states in a wave

of drug violence that has rocked Mexico in recent years, leaving more than 45,000 dead since 2006, amid a military crackdown on organized crime.

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Steve Jobs biography Amazon's top seller for 2011

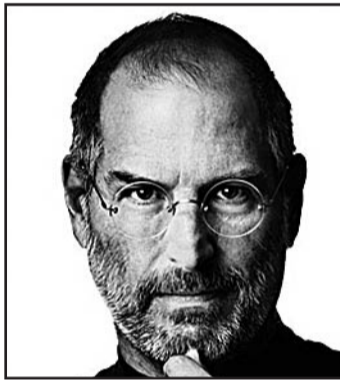
WASHINGTON (AFP) - A biography of the late Apple co-founder Steve Jobs was Amazon's best-selling book this year despite hitting store shelves and electronic readers only in late October, Amazon said yesterday.

"Steve Jobs" by Walter Isaacson, which went on sale on October 24, less than three weeks after Job's death, topped the list of Amazon top-selling books for 2011, print and Kindle editions combined, the Seattle-based company said.

"Even though it was published in October, the sales have been phenomenal in both formats," said Chris Schlupe, Amazon's senior editor of books.

Next on the list was "Bossypants" by comedian Tina Fey and "A Stolen Life" by Jaycee Dugard, a California girl who was kidnapped as a child and held for nearly two decades.

Number four on the top 10 list was "The Mill River Recluse," a self-published Kindle



Steve Jobs

novel by Darcie Chan.

"In the Garden of the Beasts" by Erik Larson was next, followed by "A Dance with Dragons" by George R.R. Martin, "The Paris Wife" by Paula McLain and "The Litigators" by John Grisham.

Another self-published Kindle book, "The Abbey" by Chris Culver, was number nine on the list while "Inheritance (The Inheritance Cycle)" by Christopher Paolini rounded out the top 10.

Amazon did not release exact sales figures for the titles.

UK tabloid right to publish Beckham 'affair,' says reporter

LONDON (AFP) - The News of the World ran allegations that football icon David Beckham cheated on his wife after deciding it showed his family man image was a sham, the paper's former chief reporter said yesterday.

Neville Thurlbeck told the Leveson public inquiry into the ethics, culture and practices of the British press that the now-defunct tabloid decided that the story was clearly in the public interest.

He described the lengths the paper went to to verify kiss-and-tell stories, saying that for every one published up to 10 others were dropped because the required level of proof could not be obtained.

Thurlbeck has been arrested as part of the police investigation into phone hacking at the News of the World, and therefore did not testify on that subject so as not to prejudice the probe.

He has not been charged with any offence.

"A great deal of activity went into establishing the truth of what people were telling us," he told the inquiry in central London.



"The myth was we made it all up and that still prevails, I think," Thurlbeck said.

"But we didn't. We went to enormous lengths to satisfy our team of lawyers that what we had was factually correct... and demonstrably correct," he said, citing phone calls and photographic evidence.

"Privacy has become a huge matter over the last three years and I would say the kiss-and-tell story now is largely dead as a genre," he said.

In 2004, he got the scoop on allegations that England, Manchester United and Real Madrid star Beckham had an affair with his assistant Rebecca Loos.

"We decided there was huge public interest in that

matter because the Beckhams had been using their marriage in order to endorse products," he said.

There were making "millions of pounds on the back of that image."

"It was a wholesome image that the family cultivated and the public bought into on a massive scale and we exposed that to be a sham."

Thurlbeck said he spent five months on the story in total, including six weeks in Australia and at least five weeks in Spain.

He was forced into revealing the magnitude of how much money Loos received, saying it was more than £100,000 (\$156,000, 118,000 euros).

"It was the most I think I'd ever paid for a story. We're talking about a six figure sum. Just," he said.



UNITED NATIONS : International Criminal Court (ICC) Chief Prosecutor elect Fatou Bensouda, from Gambia, holds a press conference at the United Nations headquarters in New York, December 12, 2011. ICC member states unanimously elected Fatou Bensouda as the new chief prosecutor of the main genocide and war crimes tribunal. (AFP PHOTO)

Pope says to travel to Cuba, Mexico before Easter

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Pope Benedict XVI said YESTERday he will travel to Cuba and Mexico in March next year for a keenly-awaited visit, confirming previous reports from Vatican officials.

The 84-year-old pope, who travelled to Brazil in 2007, made the announcement during a special mass for Latin America in the Vatican.

"Supported by divine providence, I intend to carry out an apostolic voyage before Easter to Mexico and

Cuba to proclaim the word of Christ," the pope said during his homily in Saint Peter's basilica.

The pope's announcement was greeted by applause in the basilica.

Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi said last month that the pope was planning the visit, which will come on the 400-year anniversary of the Virgin of Charity -- the patroness of communist-ruled Cuba.

John Paul II made a historic visit to Cuba in 1998.



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Health & Living

No heart risk from attention deficit drugs: study

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Most adults do not face a higher risk of heart attack when taking stimulant medications to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, US researchers said on Monday.

The study is the largest and among the first to look specifically at the risks of taking ADHD drugs for people aged 25-64, and is published in an early online version of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

Previous studies have shown that some ADHD drugs can raise blood pressure and heart rate, but follow-up research has been unable to find any higher risk of death or major complications.

A separate study last month in the New England Journal of Medicine found no higher risk among youths aged two to 24 who take stimulant medications like Ritalin, after concerns were raised years ago about potential links.

The JAMA observational study, funded by the US Food and Drug Administration and the Agency for Health Research Quality, was based on pharmacy data and medical records for 150,000 people at

four clinical sites in the United States.

Comparing those who used the drugs to those who did not, and honing in on one the specific subgroups of ADHD drugs, researchers found no higher risk of heart attack, sudden cardiac death or stroke.

However, the study did have some limitations, such as spanning a relatively short period -- about one year -- and excluding people over 65.

"It's important to note that this is an observational study and not a randomized clinical trial," said lead author Laurel Habel, a research scientist with the Kaiser Permanente Northern California Division of Research.

The drugs included in the study were stimulants such as methylphenidate, dextroamphetamine, amphetamine salts and pemoline; and the non-stimulant atomoxetine.

All were labeled for treatment of ADHD in children or adults as of December 31, 2005.

According to the latest FDA data from 2005, about 1.5 million US adults are taking ADHD medication. Of all the US prescriptions issued to children and adults, grownups account for nearly one third.

Stay-Thin Holiday Tips



During the holidays the average person consumes a whopping 2,000 to 3,000 calories. In order to burn those calories, you would have to walk 20 to 30 miles. Rather than regret your meal, here's are some practical strategies to help keep calories within reason.

Begin The Day With Breakfast -You might be tempted to save all your calories for dinner, but skipping breakfast will sabotage your holiday resolve. By eating a healthy breakfast prior to sitting down at the dinner table, you won't be too hungry and you'll be less likely to overeat.

Choose Appetizers Carefully - Opt for veggies and low-fat dip instead of nuts or cheese and crackers.

Eat Slowly - According to a University of Rhode Island study, people who eat slowly consume less calories than their hurried dinner companions.

Use A Smaller Plate - Or politely ask your host for one. Folks who choose smaller plates eat less without even

noticing it. One study showed the difference can be as substantial as 50% fewer calories consumed.

Go Light On The Meat - Choose white meat over dark meat and (And us Arubans, go easy on the Christmas Ham) and no matter

how tempting the chicken/turkey skin might be, trim it off.



Beware Of Fatty Side - Dishes Sure, that stuffing and those potato salad dishes are tempting, but they're also packed with calories. If you can't resist, allow yourself a couple of spoonfuls each and then fill up on veggies -- as long as they're not swimming in cream or cheese. Also, pile on the salad and choose oil and vinegar

dressing. What's more, pass up the bread. Refined carbohydrates like dinner rolls offer little satisfaction, loads of calories and dangerous insulin spikes.

Watch The Booze - Wine is fine in moderation, but it's helpful to dilute it with sparkling water. Allowing for two glasses diluted with water, you can save up to 200 calories.

Be Dessert-Savvy - Choose pumpkin pie instead of pecan, or sherbet or fruit salad rather than ice cream if those choices are available.

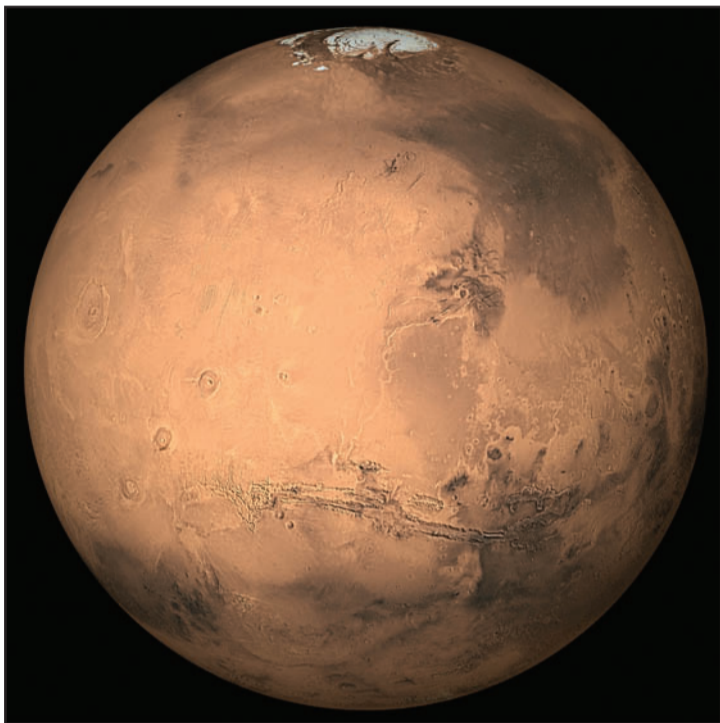
Walk It Off - Even if you've picked the right things at the meal, take a walk afterward. The fresh air will perk you up, and just ten minutes is fine for today. But adding ten minutes to your daily walk or fitness routine throughout the holidays is a good way to ward off weight gain.

Make Healthy Leftovers Instead of chicken/turkey sandwiches, use the remaining chicken/turkey to make a pot of soup with fresh chunky vegetables.



SCI-TECH

Life possible on 'large parts' of Mars



SYDNEY (AFP) - Australian scientists who modelled conditions on Mars to examine how much of the red planet was habitable said Monday that "large regions" could sustain life.

Charley Lineweaver's team, from the Australian National University, compared models of temperature and pressure conditions on Earth with those on Mars to estimate how much of the distant planet was liveable for Earth-like organisms.

While just one percent of Earth's volume -- from core to upper atmosphere -- was occupied by life, Lineweaver said their world-first modelling showed three percent of Mars was habitable, though

most of it was underground.

"What we tried to do, simply, was take almost all of the information we could and put it together and say 'is the big picture consistent with there being life on Mars?'," the astrobiologist told AFP.

"And the simple answer is yes... There are large regions of Mars that are compatible with terrestrial life."

Where previous studies had taken a "piecemeal" approach by examining particular sites on Mars for signs of life, Lineweaver said his research was a "comprehensive compilation" of the entire planet using decades of data.

Frozen water has been found at the poles on Mars and the ANU study examined how much of the planet could sustain water "that could be habitable by Earth-like standards by Earth-like microbes".

The low-pressure environment of Mars means water cannot exist as a liquid and will vaporise on the surface, but Lineweaver said the conditions are right underground, where the weight of the soil gives the added pressure required.

It would also be warm enough, at certain depths, for bacteria and other micro-organisms to thrive due to heat from the planet's core.

The average surface temperature on Mars, Earth's nearest neighbour, is minus 63 degrees Celsius (minus 81 Fahrenheit).

Lineweaver said his study was "the best estimate yet published of how habitable Mars is to terrestrial microbes" and a significant find-

ing given mankind had evolved from microbial life.

"It's not important if you want to figure out what the laws of physics are and you want to talk to some intelligent aliens who could build spaceships," he said.

"If you're interested in the origin of life and how likely life is to get started on other planets, that's what relevant here."

NASA's Curiosity Rover, the largest, most sophisticated robotic explorer ever built, is en route to Mars and due to land in August 2012.

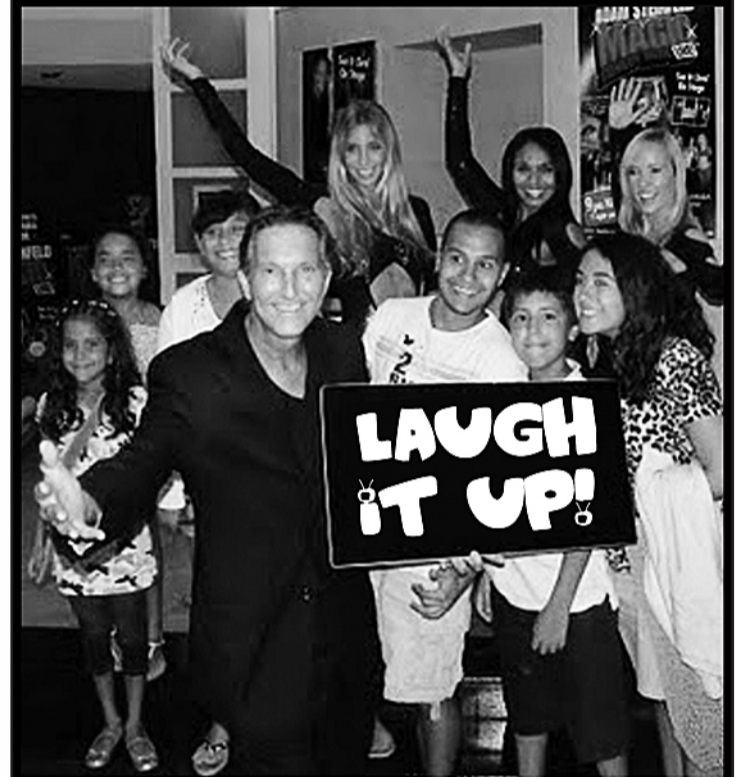
It has a laser beam for zapping rocks and a tool kit to analyse their contents as well as a robotic arm, drill, cameras and sensors to enable it to report back on the Martian weather and atmospheric radiation.

Curiosity is scheduled to land at the Gale Crater, near Mars' equator, chosen for its five kilometre (three mile) high sediment mountain which will hopefully reveal clues about the planet's wetter past

Lineweaver said the NASA mission "sadly" did not have the capability to dig deep enough to find the life his study had modelled but Curiosity would be able to examine "at least the edges" of what was once the Martian depths at the crater.

"But these have been exposed for a long time and therefore are probably devoid of volatiles and they are not warm like they used to be," he said.

Lineweaver's paper was published Monday in the scientific journal Astrobiology.



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JAPAN, Tanegashima: Japan's H-IIA rocket lifts off from the launch pad at the Tanegashima space centre in Kagoshima prefecture, on Japan's southern island of Kyushu on December 12, 2011. Japan launched a new spy satellite into orbit amid concerns over North Korea's missile programme and to monitor natural disasters in the region. (AFP PHOTO)

Report: Nintendo 3DS Circle Pad Pro will have 480-hour battery life, available February 7



Gamers let out a collective groan when Nintendo announced that a new peripheral was on the way to give its new 3DS handheld console an additional circle pad. This pad provides better con-

trol by making it easier for players to look around in-game worlds and make minute adjustments that aren't achievable otherwise. The accessory — called the Circle Pad Pro — can't draw

power from the console, meaning it needs its own battery in order to function. Now that the add-on is making its way into gamers' hands in other territories,

more information about the device is available, including a reported 480-hour lifespan from a single AAA battery.

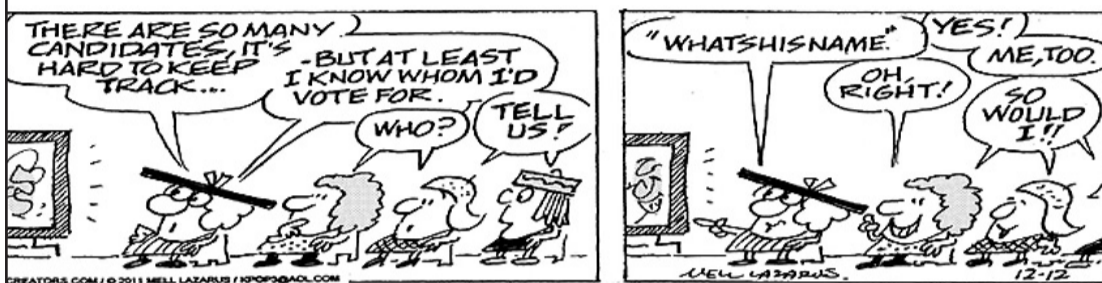
This figure was allegedly taken from the accessory's user manual, meaning it's probably just a ballpark estimate of real-world usage. Still, even if that number is cut in half, that's a ton of gaming enjoyment without the inconvenience of swapping batteries. Gamers in the United States have a bit of a wait before the add-on hits store shelves on February 7, so hopefully that generous battery stat remains the same for their trip over the pond.

COMICS

PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



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VOLUME CONTROL

ACROSS

- 1. Florida fishing resort
- 6. DDE's command
- 9. Sot's conviction: abbr.
- 12. Member of the allium family
- 13. Maria ____ Trapp
- 14. Bonn article
- 15. "____ Tonight with Peter Jennings"
- 17. Flood vessel
- 18. Paleozoic or Cenozoic
- 19. Castel Nuovo's locale
- 21. Mathematician's group
- 24. Close noisily
- 25. Robert Morse play
- 26. Ghostly
- 28. Clean a tape
- 31. Does a lube job
- 33. Prune
- 35. Forklift's burden
- 36. Queried
- 38. Violin string tightener
- 40. Before, before
- 41. Not faux
- 43. Not as remote
- 45. Farm group
- 47. Rathskeller barrel
- 48. Edible for Mr. Ed

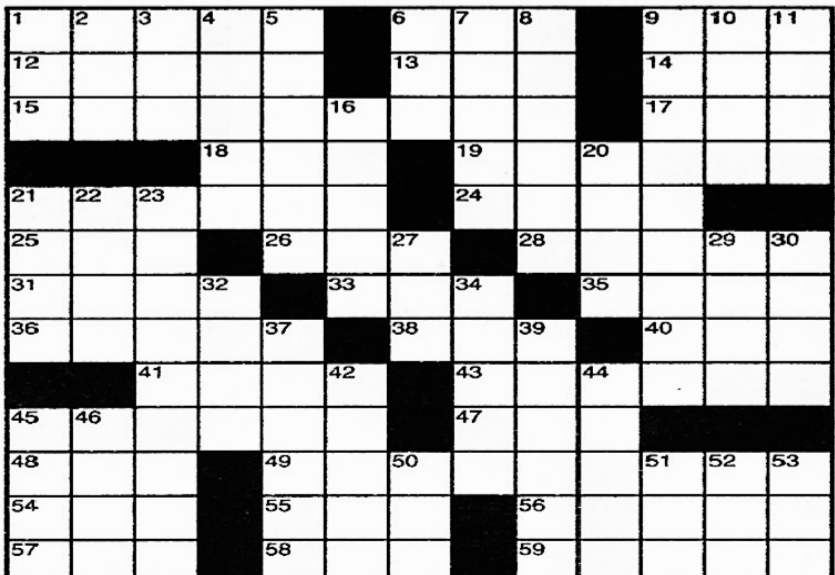
- 49. Radio and TV, e.g.
- 54. Get older
- 55. Busy ____ bee
- 56. Legislate
- 57. Bandleader Brown
- 58. 17th Greek letter
- 59. Be a hooper

DOWN

- 1. Get Betsy to the garage
- 2. Year, to Juan
- 3. Pre-Soviet commune
- 4. John Paul II and Marie Curie, e.g.
- 5. One of the Apostles

- 6. Famed apple-eater
- 7. Burgs
- 8. Reduced in price
- 9. Donald Trump, for one
- 10. Electrify
- 11. Calligraphers' supplies
- 16. KwaZulu-____ Province, South Africa
- 20. Levels of equality
- 21. Greek alameda
- 22. Writer Leon
- 23. Volume mail, charges
- 27. ____ compos

- 29. Father
- 30. Fulda feeder
- 32. Looked at
- 34. Hooligans
- 37. Buxom blonde of TV
- 39. Abounded
- 42. Restraint
- 44. Rocket booster
- 45. Objective
- 46. Blow one's cool
- 50. Saint, in Mozambique
- 51. Chief ____ George
- 52. Regulatory agency: abbr.
- 53. Had breakfast



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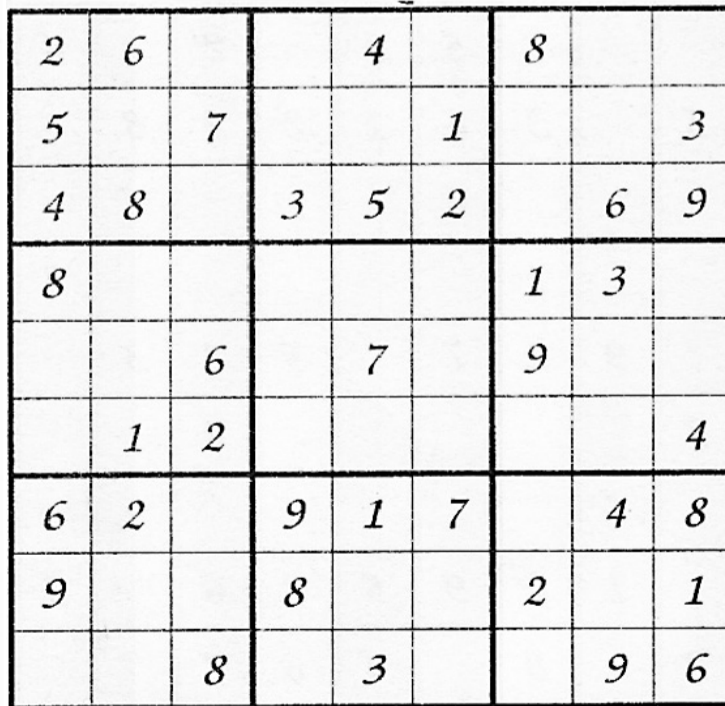
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

9	6	5	4	7	8	2	1	3
1	2	3	9	8	4	5	6	7
8	4	1	6	5	2	9	7	3
4	8	9	6	5	2	1	7	3
2	5	6	8	1	9	7	4	3
7	1	9	2	4	6	5	8	3
6	9	2	3	5	1	8	7	4
5	7	4	1	8	9	2	6	3
3	1	8	6	4	7	9	5	2

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance

Fitch sees global growth slowing as market tensions mount

PARIS (AFP) - Global growth is set to slow to 2.4 percent next year as market tensions mount and the risk of unfavourable developments has increased, Fitch Ratings said in its latest forecasts yesterday.

The ratings agency said the "global economic outlook remains weak as uncertainties increase" and lowered its forecast for global growth to 2.4 percent next year from 2.7 percent. It trimmed its forecast for 2013 to 3.0 percent from 3.1 percent.

"In Fitch's assessment downside risks dominate at this current juncture," it said. "In particular, financial tensions may intensify further in the eurozone."

It warned that the risk of "unfavourable outcomes" in the eurozone and United States was now higher.

Fitch said that despite

most EU countries deciding last week to tighten budgetary coordination to resolve the debt crisis, "market tension remains high."

The ratings agency said it expects growth in major advanced economies to slow to 1.3 percent this year, remain weak at 1.2 percent in 2012 and then nudge up to 1.9 percent in 2013.

"Fitch expects growth in the eurozone to weaken further to just 0.4 percent in 2012 owing to increased fiscal austerity measures and deteriorating financial market conditions feeding into tighter credit conditions for the broader economy," Gergely Kiss, director in Fitch's sovereign team, said in a statement.

It said the eurozone was likely to suffer mildly negative growth, although of the major economies only Italy was

likely to be in full recession.

It put the risk of a contraction in the eurozone as a whole in 2012 as one in three.

It said the recovery in the United States will remain lacklustre in the short run as it weighed down by the continued drag from the housing market as well as fiscal tightening equivalent to around one percent of gross domestic product.

However the major emerging nations -- Brazil, Russia, India and China -- often referred to as the BRIC countries -- are set for continued strong growth.

"Fitch expects the economic growth of BRIC countries will remain robust over the forecast horizon, at 6.3 percent in 2012 and 6.6 percent in 2013, well above major advanced economies or global growth rates," it said.

European stocks tumble as Moody's slams EU summit outcome

LONDON (AFP) - European stock markets and the euro tumbled yesterday as Moody's warned it will review all EU credit ratings after member states failed to deliver decisive measures to fix the eurozone crisis.

With last week's summit headlines dominated by the British veto of plans for a new EU treaty to boost fiscal and economic integration, investors were sceptical about the steps actually announced, dealers said.

They said that as in previous summits, an initial positive reaction on Friday

quickly gave way to pessimism that EU states can deliver what they promised while Moody's warning completely dispelled any feel-good factor.

Italy was once again in the firing line, with investors selling shares down sharply although Rome did manage to raise fresh finance, albeit at sharply higher costs from the markets.

US stocks also fell, compounding the negative tone in Europe.

In London, the FTSE 100 index of top shares fell 1.83 percent to 5,427.86 points, in

Paris the CAC-40 slumped 2.61 percent to 3,089.59 points and Frankfurt's DAX 30 tumbled 3.36 percent to 5,785.43 points.

Milan lost 3.79 percent and Madrid was down 3.11 percent.

The European single currency was down sharply at \$1.3183 from \$1.3384 in New York late Friday.

On Wall Street, the blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 1.47 percent while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite shed 1.62 percent.

In Asian trade earlier yesterday, Tokyo rose 1.37 percent and Sydney added 1.18 percent but Hong Kong closed flat and Shanghai lost 1.02 percent, hit by concerns over China's slowing growth.



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Sarkozy: We need Britain, but there are now 'two Europes'

PARIS (AFP) - French President Nicolas Sarkozy admitted yesterday that the European Union was now a two-speed alliance but insisted that Britain would not be forced out of the bloc's single market.

Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel fell out with Prime Minister David Cameron at least week's EU summit when London refused to sign up to a pact imposing closer economic coordination between member states.

"We did everything, the chancellor and I, to allow the British to take part in the agreement. But there are now clearly two Europes," Sarkozy said in an interview with the French daily Le Monde.

"One wants more solidarity

between its members and more regulation. The other is attached only to the logic of the single market," he said.

But, asked whether Britain, which has refused to join the single currency and opposed last week's fiscal pact, could still remain inside the EU single market, Sarkozy said: "We need Great Britain."

"We'd be greatly impoverished if we allowed its departure which, luckily, is not on the agenda," he insisted.

Sarkozy insisted that Cameron's attempt to protect London's financial centre from European regulation would fail and slammed Britain's refusal to join the European single currency.

Irish PM says no decision on euro treaty vote until March

DUBLIN (AFP) - Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny said yesterday no decision would be made before March on whether a constitutional referendum will be needed for an EU treaty aimed at saving the euro.

"What was achieved last weekend after a marathon meeting was a political agreement. That political agreement has to be worked upon in terms of text and in terms of substance," Kenny said.

"The timeline for that is approximately the end of March. At that stage from an Irish perspective... the question of whether or not a referendum is necessary or not will be on the basis of legal advice from the Attorney General.

"If a referendum is necessary then a referendum will be held," he told reporters in County Mayo in western Ireland.

Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as of:	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
12/12/2011				
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	0.98	1.00	1.002
Canada	CAD	1.720	1.740	1.760
Britain	GBP	2.720	2.770	2.830
Switzerland	CHF	1.9095	1.9167	1.9247
Netherlands	EUR	2.3387	2.3601	2.3838
Sweden	SEK	0.2508	0.2580	0.2660
Denmark	DKK	0.3078	0.3150	0.3230
Norway	NOK	0.2968	0.3040	0.3120
Japan	JPY	226.80	228.87	231.17
<i>(per 10,000)</i>				
All rates for amounts up to AWG 100,000.00 per item.				

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

F	U	E	L	G	R	A	G	C	A	W
A	N	T	I	H	A	D	A	O	L	E
N	I	C	K	N	A	M	E	S	G	E
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R	E	S	I	D	E		T	O	R	O
E	M	O	T	E	S		E	N	A	M
A	M	B							E	N
P	A	R	I	S	H		A	G	E	N
I	O	T	A				S	O	U	S
S	E	Q	U	E	L		T	O	R	
T	A		P	S	E	U	D	O	N	Y
U	S	E		P	E	R		P	E	E
B	E	T		E	Y	R	E		E	T

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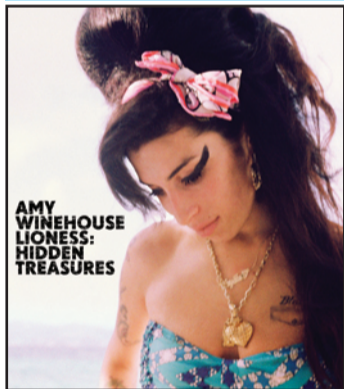


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Posthumous Amy Winehouse album hits British number one



LONDON (AFP) - Soul singer Amy Winehouse topped Britain's album chart Sunday more than four months after her death, with music lovers buying almost 200,000 copies of the record "Lioness: Hidden Treasures."

The posthumous collection of alternative versions of classics, unreleased tracks and covers hit the number one spot after being released last Monday.

Producers Salaam Remi and Mark Ronson put the 12-track album together after listening to thousands of hours of recordings by the singer, who died in July aged 27 following years of drug and alcohol abuse.

The Official Charts Company said the album sold more than 194,000 copies to give Winehouse the biggest weekly sales tally of her career.

The record replaces "In Case You Didn't Know" by British singer-songwriter Olly Murs at the number one spot in the album chart.

Some of the proceeds from the album will go towards the Amy Winehouse Foundation, set up in the singer's memory to help fund charities that support young people.

Must-Ban TV? American Airlines May Pull 30 Rock Over Alec Baldwin's Planegate

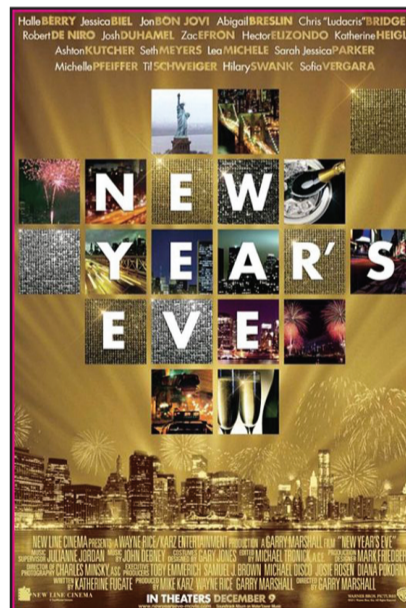
Well, well, well. Despite (or because of?) Alec Baldwin's hilarious weekend spoof, it looks like the last laugh in his airline debacle is still up for grabs. And American Airlines is doing everything they can to ensure it's theirs (while punishing their sitcom-loving passengers in the process!). E! News has confirmed that the seemingly grudge-holding American Airlines Flight Attendants Union has taken the first steps to make sure Baldwin—or his TV alter ego—never step foot in their planes again. The airlines confirmed that since Alec's game of Words With Friends gained him some enemies (or more accurately, since the actor spoofed the airline on Saturday Night Live over the weekend), the union has broached the subject with those in charge of making such decisions of pulling the critically lauded 30 Rock from its inflight entertainment lineup. So if it was possible, the skies just got even less friendly for Alec Baldwin. And less amusing for Alec Baldwin fans.

'New Year's Eve' leads slow box office sales

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Holiday romance "New Year's Eve" led North American box office charts over the weekend, although sales were sluggish, industry estimates showed Sunday.

The star-studded romantic comedy featuring Michelle Pfeiffer and Zac Efron, with appearances by Robert de Niro and Halle Barry, scored \$13.7 million for its opening weekend, according to Exhibitor Relations.

That pushed it ahead of adult comedy "The Sitter," with Jonah Hill starring as a reluctant babysitter. Also showing in theaters for the



theaters.

In fifth place was animated family comedy "Arthur Christmas," about Santa's son tasked with completing a mission by Christmas morning. It pulled in \$6.6 million.

Martin Scorsese's first 3-D film "Hugo" came in sixth place. The adventure drama based on Brian Selznick's novel "The Invention of Hugo Cabret" about a boy who lives alone in a Paris railway station raked in \$6.1 million.

In seventh was George Clooney comedy-drama "The Descendants," with \$4.4 million, enough to push it ahead of penguin tale "Happy Feet Two," which got \$3.8 million.

Adam Sandler's "Jack and Jill" comedy, in which he plays both a successful Los Angeles advertising executive and his needy twin sister, came in ninth. It got \$3.2 million.

Big-budget 3-D epic "Immortals" rounded out the top 10, with \$2.4 million.

first time this week, it raked in \$10 million.

Blockbuster vampire heart-throb flick "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn: Part 1," came in third after three weeks at the top of box office. It rang up \$7.9 million, pushing it past the quarter-billion-dollar mark for a total of \$259.5 million so far.

That put the teen vampire sequel ahead of "The Muppets," the new film based on Jim Henson's puppet characters, which grossed \$7.1 million for its third week in

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Adorable and affordable; 5 Burgers Aruba offers an island twist to the great American Burger



Aaron and Manager Marc Anthony

Expatriates residing on Aruba, Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. Some may be quite well acquainted with a nationally known U.S franchise bearing the name "5", and patrons can expect the same great quality between the buns, but an expanded menu and Rosie and Aaron's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," comments Aaron; and upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

Prices vary only slightly between regular and small (basically 2 patties or 1) with specialty items such as Gouda Burger, Farmer's Burger, Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with crispy onion rings and BBQ sauce. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jalapeño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato... whatever the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries, which are made from hand-cut fresh Idaho potatoes, is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet



cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!" Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

If you are a fan of crispy friend onion rings, as we are at THE MORNING NEWS, you cannot leave there without trying their secret recipe battered dipped gourmet rings, made from fresh, not frozen onions. Unquestionably, the best we have had anywhere, and for those that like a little spice, the fried jalapeños are a real treat. Aaron and Rosie have expanded their menu to accommodate certain tastes and dietary needs; they offer a tasty grilled chicken sandwich as well.

5 Burgers Aruba is open for lunch & dinner - daily hours are Noon to 10-ish; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner or Manager Marc Anthony when things are not too busy, to sit and chat while sharing their knowledge of the island. Totally yummy and fun plus a great deal for a quality burger, they are definitely worth a visit

Bid deadline nears for Japanese ace Darvish

NEW YORK (AFP) - Major League Baseball clubs have until Wednesday to submit bids for negotiating rights to Japanese pitcher Yu Darvish, who could surpass the record payout spent for Daisuke Matsuzaka five years ago.

The 25-year-old right-hander was posted by the Japan League's Nippon Ham Fighters and one lucky winner among North American bidders will have 30 days to negotiate a contract deal with Darvish.

Darvish, who joined the Fighters in 2005 after high school, was born to an Iranian father and a Japanese mother. He was this season's highest-paid player in Japanese baseball at an estimated 500 million yen (\$6.4 million) a season.

Darvish went 18-6 last season for the Hokkaido-based Fighters with a 1.44 earned-run average and 276 strikeouts in 232 innings. At 6-foot-5 (196cm) and 216 pounds (98kg), his size and skill figures to be baffling for



US batters.

The Texas Rangers, losers in each of the past two World Series, have shown great interest in Darvish and need pitching help after losing southpaw starter C.J. Wilson to the Los Angeles Angels in a major free agency deal last week.

Expect the New York Yankees to be involved as well, with general manager Brian

Cashman praising Darvish's skills, notably on display against major league talent in Japan's second World Baseball Classic victory in 2009.

"He is extremely talented but in terms of how it transitions, it's hard to say," Cashman said.

The last time a Japanese pitching prospect created so much excitement among US clubs was in 2006 when the Boston Red Sox went after Matsuzaka, spending \$51.1 million for negotiating rights and \$52 million on a six-year contract.

Matsuzaka helped the Red Sox win the 2007 World Series, their second crown in four seasons after a drought since 1918.

The US market for Japanese talent has been slow recently, with the New York Yankees spending only \$2 million to speak to Japan all-star shortstop Hiroiyuki Nakajima and Yokohama relief pitcher Hiroki Sanada lured no bidders last week.

Neymar as good as Zico: Santos coach

TOYOTA (AFP) - Neymar is up there with some of the greatest footballers ever including Zico, Rivelino and Zinedine Zidane, Santos coach Muricy Ramalho says, branding the forward's talent "absurd".

The prodigious 19-year-old, who is coveted by many of Europe's top sides, on Friday said at the Club World Cup that he would never be as good as Pele and insisted that Lionel Messi was currently the best in the world.

The intercontinental showpiece could see Neymar and Messi face each other in

the final, leading to more comparisons between the pair.

Asked if his man was up there with the likes of fellow Brazilians Zico and Rivelino, and the French master Zidane, Ramalho said: "Yes. Neymar is certainly on this level."

"And I'm someone who urges caution with regards to calling players great. In Brazil, a player has one good game and they say he's great," he told globoesporte.com.

"A great is a genius who sees the play before the oth-

ers do. And that is rare. The best I saw was Zico. Pele doesn't count -- he was on a level of his own."

"Zico had all the fundamentals: he could head, dribble, shoot well with both feet, had great vision and was an athlete. This is a great. Zico, Rivelino, Zidane... Neymar is on this level."

"The way that he plays is absurd."

Ramalho's men play the Japanese champions Kashiwa Reysol and their former Santos player Nelsinho in the semi-finals of the Club World Cup on Wednesday.

Lakers' Bryant unhappy with Odom departure

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Los Angeles Lakers superstar Kobe Bryant was scratching his head Sunday after news that the club was shipping Lamar Odom to Western Conference rivals -- and NBA champions -- Dallas.

"To be honest with you, I don't like it," Bryant said at the team's training camp.

"It's tough to lose Lamar," Bryant said. "Pau (Gasol) is still here, and we're all thankful for that. It's hard when you've been through so many battles with players to just see them go somewhere else. It's tough."

Odom and Gasol had been named as players headed out

of Los Angeles in a proposed trade that would have brought Chris Paul to the Lakers. That deal, however, was quashed by the NBA.

The Lakers and Mavericks announced the deal late Sunday, after Dallas coach Rick Carlisle and star Dirk Nowitzki said they were excited to welcome Odom.

He averaged 14.4 points, 8.7 rebounds and three assists in winning the sixth-man award as the league's top reserve last season -- all while starring in a reality television series with his wife, Khloe Kardashian, that some feared would be a distraction to his team.

"You're talking about the sixth man of the year last year," Bryant said. "He played lights-out. He had his best season last year, clearly wasn't a distraction, played his butt off. I don't get where that comes from."

Odom didn't attend training on Sunday but Spain's Gasol did.

"I understand this is a business, and it's become more of a business than a sport nowadays," Gasol said. "It hasn't been extremely easy to be calm and quiet and not think about the different possibilities. But I'm still here, and I'm thankful for that."

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Brazil proposes contest for World Cup mascot

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Brazilian Sports Minister Aldo Rebelo on Monday proposed an Internet contest to decide whether a "saci," a popular character in Brazilian folklore, a macaw or a jaguar should be the mascot of the 2014 World Cup.

"My idea is to have a broad public contest, on the Internet, so that people can give their views. Other suggestions, in addition to the saci, the macaw or the jaguar, could emerge that we can submit to FIFA or the local organizing committee as the preference of the Brazilian people," he said.

"The mascot is not chosen by the sports ministry or the local organizing committee," he said in an interview with CBN radio. "But I think we can have our say."

"I have some sympathy for the saci," said the minister referring to the one-legged black youngster, who smokes a pipe and wears a magical red cap that enables him to disappear and reappear where

ever he wishes.

An indigenous deity under Portuguese colonial rule, the saci was quickly adopted by black Brazilians. It is viewed as an annoying prankster in most parts of the country, and as a potentially dangerous and malicious creature in others.

"But there is those who want the mascot to be the jaguar, which is part of Brazil's fauna and very present in literature, in the poetry of (Antonio de) Castro Alves, for example," Rebelo said.

The official mascot of football's 2010 World Cup held in South Africa was a green-haired leopard named Zakumi, with the ZA standing for South Africa and the kumi meaning 10 in assorted African languages.

The first World Cup mascot appeared at the 1966 competition in England. World Cup Willie was a lion, a symbol of Britain, wearing a Union Flag jersey with the words "WORLD CUP."

India can beat Australia, says Dhoni

CHENNAI (AFP) - India can beat Michael Clarke's struggling team and win their first Test series in Australia if they play to their potential, skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni said Monday.

"The team is looking good and can beat Australia," Dhoni told reporters in Chennai ahead of the squad's departure for four Tests and a triangular one-day series also featuring Sri Lanka.

"I will focus on our strengths and weaknesses and hope for results on the field. We are more concerned about where we need to work on and not worry about what kind of opposition we are playing."

Dhoni's comments came on the day when Clarke's Australians lost the second Test by seven runs against

New Zealand in Hobart, their first loss against the Kiwis at home in 26 years.

The defeat was also Australia's third in eight Tests under Clarke's captaincy.

India will be playing their first away Test series since losing all four matches in England in July-August that cost Dhoni's men their number one Test ranking.

Dhoni hoped the players will remain fit for the Australia series, unlike in England when key stars like Zaheer Khan, Virender Sehwag and Harbhajan Singh were sidelined.

India open the three-month tour on December 15, with two practice matches in Canberra ahead of the first Test starting at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on December 26.

LeBron, Wade ready to lift Heat back to NBA Finals

MIAMI (AFP) - Miami Heat stars LeBron James and Dwyane Wade are putting last season's heartbreaking loss in the NBA Finals behind them and rededicating themselves toward capturing a championship.

"We have to get over it and move on," James said on Monday. "We can't replay last season. We're getting ready for the 2011-2012 season not the 2010-2011 season."

"We have moved on but we will use some of the things we did well last year to get better and some of the failures we had last year to get us better."

The Heat lost to Dallas in the NBA Finals and Miami will open the upcoming lock-out-shortened NBA season on December 25 at Dallas, watching the Mavericks celebrate their first NBA title.

A year ago, James was the target of complaints after leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers to join Wade and Chris Bosh in Miami as an all-star lineup. They fell short of their ultimate goal last season but are ready for another try.

"We didn't come together to make the playoffs. We came together to win the NBA Finals," James said.

"We know it's a long road. We're not going to shortcut

any steps in the journey. We know what it takes to get there. We're going to try to get back to that point."

As for lingering hard feelings after being portrayed as a villain by some for switching teams, James is taking it more in stride this time around.

"Not too much bothers me any more," he said. "I'm in a good place."

James said the extra rest has helped prepare him for the rigors of playing 66 games in four months, almost a game every other night on average.

"I'm more alive, more excited to get back where I am," James said. "I had two months off. I'm excited and happy to be back and happy to see the guys."

Wade said the emphasis early in the season will be upon working into peak playing condition and avoiding injury. Wade used pilates, yoga and boxing workouts to occupy himself in the off-season.

"I did a lot of things to keep myself active and strong," Wade said. "Now this is when you get into NBA shape. You can't get into NBA shape without this. It's good to be back here in training camp."

Chiefs fire Haley after 5-8 start

KANSAS CITY (AFP) - Todd Haley was fired as coach of the Kansas City Chiefs on Monday, a day after the team slumped to 5-8 in the National Football League season with a 37-10 loss to the New York Jets.

Haley guided the Chiefs to last year's AFC West division crown but the team struggled this season, committing 11 penalties for 128 yards against the Jets with Haley picking up one for unsportsmanlike conduct.

The Chiefs have the best record of any last-place team in any of the NFL's eight divisions, but that was little consolation for Chiefs chief executive and chairman Clark Hunt.

"This was a difficult decision but one that we feel is best for the future of the Chiefs," Hunt said. "Although there have been bright spots at different points this season, we have not made meaningful progress and we

felt that it was necessary to make a change."

The Chiefs were 19-27 under Haley, who had never coached an NFL club before his run of nearly three years with the Chiefs, a tenure that included a 10-6 run to the division crown last year.

"Todd helped this team in many valuable ways over the past three seasons," said Chiefs general manager Scott Pioli.

"Unfortunately, we have not been able to establish the kind of consistency we need to continue to build a strong foundation for the future and we believe a change is important at this time."

Haley was an assistant coach with the Jets, Chicago, Dallas and Arizona before taking over the Chiefs. He becomes the second NFL coach to be fired this season after the Jacksonville Jaguars axed Jack Del Rio last month.



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Dolphins dump Sparano



MIAMI (AFP) - Tony Sparano was fired as coach of the National Football League's Miami Dolphins on Monday, one day after the team fell to 4-9 on the season with a 26-10 home loss to Philadelphia.

The Eagles won for only the second time in their past six games and improved to 5-8 by beating the Dolphins,

who started 0-7 and saw a three-game home win streak snapped on Sunday.

Sparano became the third NFL coach fired this season following Jacksonville dumping Jack Del Rio last month and Kansas City axing Todd Haley earlier on Monday.

Assistant coach Todd Bowles was named interim

coach of the Dolphins, who finish the season with games at Buffalo and New England and on January 1 at home against the New York Jets.

Sparano went 29-33 in more than three seasons guiding the Dolphins, enjoying his best success in 2008 in his debut campaign when Miami won the AFC East division title after going 1-15 the season before.

"It's with a lot of regret that I feel it's in the best interest of the Miami Dolphins to replace Tony Sparano at this time," owner Stephen Ross said.

"In the interest of the development of this team, this is the time to make the change. We will have time to find the coach that I hope will lead us back to the glory of the past."



Juventus' defender Giorgio Chiellini celebrates scoring during the Italian serie A football match AS Roma vs Juventus at Olympic stadium in Rome on December 12, 2011. Juventus came from behind to draw 1-1 at Roma on Monday and return to the top of the Serie A table. (AFP PHOTO)



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Packers march on; Texans, Saints in playoffs

GREEN BAY (AFP) - The Green Bay Packers continued their march toward perfection with a 46-16 rout of Oakland on Sunday as Houston and New Orleans secured NFL playoff berths.

Aaron Rodgers threw for 281 yards and two touchdowns, Ryan Grant had two rushing touchdowns and Charles Woodson intercepted a pass against his former team as the Packers pummeled a Raiders team vying for the AFC West division title and took their record to 13-0.

The Packers were in such firm control that Rodgers went to the bench in the third quarter, allowing backup Matt Flynn to take over.

Houston squeaked out a 20-19 victory over Cincinnati to book the first playoff berth in club history.

Rookie T.J. Yates threw a six-yard touchdown pass with two seconds left and the Texans claimed the AFC South division crown minutes later when



Tennessee fell 22-17 to New Orleans.

Saints quarterback Drew Brees helped make that happen, throwing two touch-

down passes to Marques Colston in the fourth quarter of the win over the Titans. Brees joined Hall of Famer Johnny Unitas as the only quarterbacks to throw a touchdown pass in 40 straight games.

The Saints were assured of a playoff berth when Chicago lost in overtime to Denver.

Tim Tebow again rallied the Broncos for a victory, Matt Prater booting the game-winning 51-yard field goal with 8:34 remaining in overtime for a 13-10 win. Prater struck from 59 yards to tie the score with three seconds left in regulation.

It was a thriller in Dallas as well, as the New York Giants ended a four-game skid with a 37-34 victory over the Cowboys in a roller-coaster duel of NFC East division rivals.

Eli Manning guided the Giants to two touchdowns in the last four minutes.

The Cowboys appeared to tie the game with a 47-yard field goal as time expired. But the Giants had managed to call a timeout just before the kick. When Dan Bailey tried again, his effort was blocked by Giants defensive standout Jason Pierre-Paul.

The teams are now tied at 7-6 atop the division, but the Giants have an edge as they host the Cowboys in their season finale on New Year's Day.

Adding to the Cowboys' woes, running back DeMarco Murray broke his right ankle,

ending his record-setting rookie season.

New England defeated the Redskins 34-27 in Washington, where the Patriots' Rob Gronkowski set an NFL single-season record for most touchdown catches by a tight end with his 14th and 15th.

Atlanta stayed alive in the NFC wild card race as they rallied for a 31-23 victory over Carolina and Detroit gained a valuable 34-28 victory over Minnesota.

The New York Jets fueled their playoff hopes with a 37-10 victory over Kansas City. Arizona surprised playoff-bound San Francisco 21-19 as John Skelton came in for injured Cardinals QB Kevin Kolb and threw for three

touchdowns.

San Diego kept their slim playoff hopes alive and eliminated Buffalo from post-season contention with a 37-10 triumph.

Philadelphia welcomed quarterback Michael Vick back from a three-game absence with broken ribs and beat Miami 26-10 and Jacksonville beat Tampa Bay 41-14.

The misery continued for Indianapolis, who fell to 0-13 with a 24-10 loss to Baltimore.

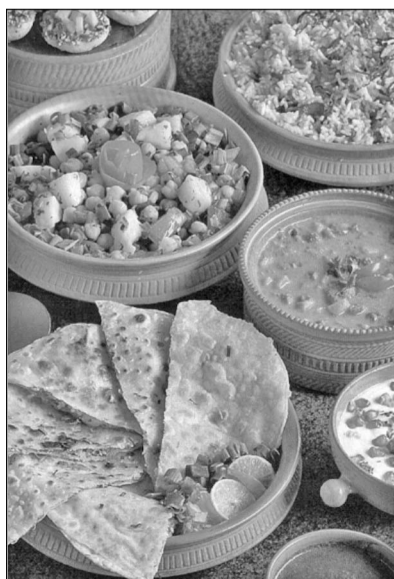
The Ravens, tied with Pittsburgh atop the AFC North, limited the Colts to 167 yards.

The Colts are now three defeats away from joining the 2008 Lions as the only NFL teams to go 0-16 in a season.

LeBron, Wade ready to lift Heat back to NBA Finals?



LeBron, Wade ready to lift Heat back to NBA Finals? See story on pg 15



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